



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Approved Grants for Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership Projects**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership are pleased to announce the approval of over \$1 million in grants aimed at supporting on-the-ground fish habitat work in the Great Lakes under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

"We are pleased to support these projects to benefit aquatic habitat under the Partnership, and recognize the GLRI as a tremendous opportunity to implement on the ground restoration in the basin," said Mike Weimer, Assistant Regional Director of Fisheries for the Midwest Region of USFWS.

The 2010 grant recipients are as follows:

Michigan—

**The Conservation Resource Alliance** was granted \$ 214,286 for the Upper Great Lakes Stream Connectivity and Habitat Initiative. The Conservation Resource Alliance, Huron Pines and its partners will utilize these and other funds to improve 75 miles of Great Lakes tributaries by restoring fish passage and in-stream habitat; and 5,000 acres of stream-side habitat over the next two years

**City of Rochester Hills** was granted \$192,857 for the Avon Creek Restoration. Avon Creek in Rochester Hills, Michigan, is part of the Clinton River Area of Concern, a designated area located just north of Detroit and part of the Lake Huron drainage. The watershed has suffered from years of degradation due to industrial activities and development, resulting in the loss of fish and wildlife habitat, and reductions in fish populations. The City of Rochester Hills will restore natural stream meanders in a designated 825 linear stretch of the creek to reduce sediment entering the stream, restore fish habitat, and reduce water temperatures.

**The Conservation Resource Alliance** was granted \$ 107,143 for the North Branch Manistee River Fish Passage and Habitat Restoration. The Conservation Resource Alliance of Michigan will work with several partners to remove five undersized and sediment clogged culverts aggregated at one road/stream crossing, and replace them with a more environmentally-friendly road crossing structure. Upon completion, the project will provide upstream access to over 30 miles of high quality habitat for fish and aquatic organisms in the North Branch Manistee River, a tributary to the Lake Michigan near Kalkaska, Michigan.

**St. Clair County Drain Commission** was granted \$121,429 for the Howe-Brandymore Stream Restoration Project. Prior to being channelized for agriculture and development in the mid 1800's to create the Howe-Brandymore Drain, McNeil Creek was a naturally flowing stream tributary to the St. Clair River in St. Clair County, Michigan. In its current channelized form, the stream is heavily degraded from poor substrate, "flashy" flows during high water, elevated water temperatures from a lack of shade due to vegetation loss at streamside, and non-point source pollution. The St. Clair County Drain Commissioner will restore approximately three miles of riverine habitat to benefit native warm-water fish species by

reconnecting the stream to its floodplain, replacing undersized culverts, and restoring riffle and pool habitat. In addition, up to 54 acres of streambank and riparian habitat will be restored by planting native trees and shrubs. This restoration effort will serve as a model for restoring other county drains back to their natural pre-channelized conditions.

**City of Trenton** was granted \$14,286 for the Elias Cove Fish Habitat Native Plantings. Elias Cove, formerly the Black Lagoon, is a Great Lakes Area of Concern along the Detroit River in the City of Trenton, Michigan. In 2005, sediments contaminated with oil, mercury, lead, zinc and PCBs were removed and portions of the shoreline physically restored. Funds for this project will allow the city to plant aquatic vegetation in the emergent wetland shelf and wet meadow riparian edge around the Cove, providing critically needed spawning and nursery habitat for native fish species in the Detroit River.

New York—

**Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District** was granted \$ 55,314 for the North Branch Wiscoy Creek Restoration. The Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District will improve habitat for the North Branch of the Wiscoy Creek fishery by restoring pool and riffle habitat within the stream, which will provide cover for aquatic species. This project will further protect and restore the Wiscoy through plantings of native vegetation streamside, which will provide much-needed shade and buffer stretches of the creek. These efforts will provide additional high-quality coolwater habitat for temperature sensitive species of fish, including trout, dace, and darters.

**Conesus Lake Association** was granted \$ 35,714 to Restore Wetlands at Conesus Inlet Fish and Wildlife Management Area. Conesus Lake, the most westward of New York's Finger Lakes, has lost a significant amount of nearshore littoral zone wetlands that historically provided important fish habitat. Currently, the Conesus Inlet Fish and Wildlife Management Area include wetlands that provide the only spawning and nursery habitat for northern pike in the lake. The Conesus Lake Association will work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to restore and improve these wetlands for pike and other wetland –dependent fish and wildlife, including amphibians and reptiles. Restoration will include replacement of several water control structures which will restore the State's ability to manage the marsh effectively, ultimately providing long-term benefits for the native wetland community.

Minnesota—

**The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)** was granted \$ 285,714 for Riparian Habitat Assessment, Protection and Management in Minnesota's Lake Superior Watershed. The quality of the North Shore of Lake Superior's riverine and nearshore habitat is due, in part, to the overall healthy condition of the riparian corridors that line the streams tributary to the lake. This project will inventory riparian areas along most Lake Superior streams in Minnesota and prioritize sites that, if restored and protected, will promote and ensure angler success and stream habitat quality into the future. Following this two year study, the MDNR will work over the next 25 years with willing landowners to provide angler access and long-term stewardship of riparian habitat on their lands.

Pennsylvania—

**The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission** was granted \$ 30,000 for Cassidy Park Fish Habitat Improvement on Walnut Creek. Walnut Creek has experienced man-made disturbance and changes to its hydrology over decades, resulting in a loss of instream fish habitat. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Millcreek Township, and Steelhead Association will begin to improve this stream by adding and anchoring large logs strategically into the stream. Over time, these logs will begin to capture gravel as it moves downstream, creating habitat and provide locations for the growth of aquatic plants and other benthic animals. In addition, the instream structures will serve as a buffer and help lower stream water temperatures, providing important habitat for coolwater fishes during summer months.

Wisconsin—

**Bad River Watershed Association** was granted \$ 171,086 to Improve Habitat and Fish Passage in the Bad River Watershed. The Bad River watershed in Wisconsin is one Lake Superior's largest and most biologically diverse. However, the system contains over 800 road crossings, many of which act as barriers to fish movement. The Bad River Watershed Association will restore fish passage at four road/stream crossings in cooperation with Iron and Ashland County Land Conservation Districts and local municipalities. The four sites addressed by this project will complement the 15 previously restored sites, and collectively provide access for fish to important coldwater spawning, nursery and feeding habitats, and reduce sediment loading into the Bad River.

The grants were awarded under the Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a Department of the Interior agency. The grants were funded by the President's 2010 Budget which provided \$475 million for the Environmental Protection Agency –led, interagency Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. For more information on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service activities related specifically to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, please visit [www.fws.gov/GLRI](http://www.fws.gov/GLRI) .

The Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership (<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/GLBFHP/>) is a recognized partnership of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (<http://www.fishhabitat.org/>) and was formed to make habitats whole and accessible for fish and other aquatic organisms, from headwater streams to deep lake habitats. For more information about the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, its partnerships and programs, please visit [www.fishhabitat.org](http://www.fishhabitat.org) .

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) .